



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Journal

March-April 2002 Volume 2 Issue 5

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Pedestrian Bridge

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Transportation Excellence

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A Bear of a Highway

Bridging the Carquinez



EXCELLENCE
IN TRANSPORTATION

CALTRANS SALUTES TRANSPORTATION EXCELLENCE

Excellence has been a tradition at Caltrans and its predecessors for more than 100 years, and 17 years ago, the department decided to showcase outstanding work in transportation design, construction, operations and technology by establishing the Caltrans Excellence in Transportation Awards program. The program provides an annual opportunity to salute those in Caltrans, local agencies and in business who are dedicated to surmounting California's transportation challenges.

This is not a derby, nor is it the Oscars. It is an illustration of how public agencies think and work hard to provide a service to the citizens of this state. The Journal proudly publishes accounts of projects that our judges have found to be meritorious, in the hope that the creativity and industry demonstrated therein may be emulated elsewhere.

With all of us working toward excellence, we not only continue a grand tradition, but take larger steps in our pursuit of the most efficient and safest transportation system that can be designed, built and operated.

For these reasons, the Journal recognizes extraordinary performance by those who have contributed notable improvements to our state's infrastructure. The winners of the 2001 Excellence in Transportation Awards program:

By Janis DeVerter
Caltrans Excellence in
Transportation Awards Coordinator



Caltrans District 11
City of San Diego

MAXWELL SAFETY ROADSIDE REST AREA

*Transportation Related
Facilities*

To provide increased safety and a reduction in vandalism, a landscape associate in District 3 proposed to make space at the Maxwell Safety Roadside Rest Area for California Highway Patrol officers to do paperwork or provide information to motorists, while establishing a casual law enforcement presence.

On Interstate 5 in Colusa County, the CHP officers' presence deters crime and mischievous activity and offers motorists a sense of increased security. Designs involve three standard components at each rest area: a secure office building, an office positioned for officers to view the area, designated parking and a highway sign informing motorists that the area is patrolled by the CHP.



Caltrans District 3 Landscape Architecture
California Highway Patrol



SACRAMENTO RIVER TRAIL EXTENSION IN REDDING

Transportation Related Facilities - Bicycle and Pedestrian Pathways

The 1.1-km Sacramento River Trail Extension in Redding, between State Highway 273 and Interstate 5, ascends 65 meters through a canyon that once contained a burn dump.

The trail, climbing up the canyon from the river terrace, meanders through valley oak more than 100 years old. It was designed for minimal impact to the oak, manzanita, colanthus, pipevine and wild grape community, which has been reserved for wildlife that thrives along the river.

The trail accommodates all-weather hiking, biking and equestrian use, and its panoramic views of river, mountain ranges and city of Redding have proven popular with hikers and bicyclists. It provides access from residential developments to the Sacramento River and river trail, the Arboretum and a future pedestrian bridge at Turtle Bay.



City of Redding

Bryan A Stirrat & Associates

Lampe Engineering

Guinn Construction

Tullis & Heller, Inc.

TAHOE CITY URBAN IMPROVEMENT

Transportation Related Facilities

This project provided sidewalks in the small Lake Tahoe village of Tahoe City to encourage pedestrian access where no designated or continuous corridor had previously existed.

Where pavement formerly extended from the highway to storefronts, the area was used for parking, drainage, pedestrians and bicyclists in a haphazard manner. Parking has been improved by designating parallel spaces and constructing two off-street public parking lots. This project enhanced bicycle travel by providing additional paved shoulders. It also provided seat walls and large boulders for resting, lighting for nighttime safety and convenience, and bollards to designate space for vehicles and pedestrians.



Placer County Department of Public Works

Tahoe City Public Utility District

K.B. Foster Civil Engineering

Burdick Excavating Company



EXCELLENCE
IN TRANSPORTATION

SANTA YSABEL EAST RANCH ACQUISITION

The Environment

The Santa Ysabel East Ranch Transportation Enhancement Activity Acquisition provided for the purchase of a portion of approximately 1580 ha of a ranch in eastern San Diego County. The acquisition preserved important natural habitats and high scenic values in a developing area. Caltrans District 11 entered a financial agreement with seven other public and private organizations to conserve the property, a large portion of the original Ranch de Santa Ysabel Spanish land grant, situated near the intersections of State Routes 78 and 79.

The land affords views of rolling hills with oak woodlands, riparian habitat and grasslands. Its acquisition not only safeguards its scenic quality but also preserves habitat that will become a part of a Natural Community Conservation Plan for the region and its visitors, now and for generations to come.



Caltrans District 11 Local Assistance

The Nature Conservancy

CA Department of Fish and Game

**San Diego County Department of
Parks and Recreation**



ALBANY MUDFLAT MITIGATION

The Environment

Required as mitigation for impacts from construction of High Occupancy Vehicle lanes along Interstate 80, this project restored and enhanced shoreline habitat within the Albany mudflat near Interstate 580 in Richmond and Albany. The project removed debris and exotic plants from environmentally sensitive areas, excavated and removed buried hazardous waste, created new wetlands and shore-bird habitat, constructed bio-engineered slope protection and a portion of a multi-use path and installed native plants.

Caltrans District 4 Office of Landscape Architecture

S.F. Bay Conservation and Development Commission

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

U. S. Army Corps of Engineers

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service recognizes the Albany mudflat as one of the most critical bird habitats in the San Francisco Bay. Through careful attention to detail and a commitment to protect and promote the environment, Caltrans has given the public a highly successful, aesthetically pleasing project.

HIGHWAY 168 SIERRA FREEWAY WILDFLOWER DESIGN

Special Recognition for Excellence in Highway Beautification

The State Route 168 Sierra Freeway, a cooperative effort between Caltrans and the Fresno County Transportation Authority, was completed in December 2000. This wildflower project, developed by the Caltrans District 6 Landscape Architecture Branch, featured a seed mix of grasses and legumes to control erosion and water pollution. With little additional cost, climate-suitable wildflowers, added for soil stabilization, created a low-growing carpet of color from late winter to late spring. Wildflowers in the median provide spectacular color and interest with little or no need for maintenance personnel to enter the area.

The wildflowers complement the views of the Sierra Nevada and provide a transition from an urban to a rural landscape that has become so popular, nearby residents have begun asking for the "mix."



Caltrans District 6 Landscape Architecture



Caltrans Central Region Survey Department

MOJAVE BYPASS REAL-TIME SURVEY

Systems Operations

In January 2000, Caltrans Central Region Surveys opted to use Real Time Surveying to set preliminary right-of-way monuments and construction staking on the Mojave Bypass project. Real-time surveying uses Global Positioning System satellites, a radio transmitter and a radio-linked rover to obtain accuracies in a range of 200 mm.

To monument the new right of way, preliminary stakes were set and surveyed by stringent GPS Fast Static methods and adjusted to the precise location of the monument, achieving time savings of 20-30 percent.

Before construction, crews used Real-Time Survey technology to stake 65 km of tortoise fence, reducing survey crew hours by 50 percent. Slope stakes were set in half the expected time, with desired accuracies. In addition to cost savings, the system improved safety for the survey crew by allowing the base station to be set up away from construction activity.



EXCELLENCE
IN TRANSPORTATION

SAN DIEGO RAMP METERING

Systems Operations

Caltrans operates a system of 267 ramp meters in San Diego County, which regulate travel on 420 km of freeways. Recently the district developed a more efficient and cost-effective system to further reduce highway congestion, increase public safety and improve and maintain system performance.

The system is composed of local microprocessors that measure freeway flow, receive commands and return system status to a central control system and operate single or multiple lane ramp signals. The system allows users to manage and monitor the ramp meter operation from a web browser, interfacing with the existing front-end processor and traffic controllers. It features a web server and associated web pages, common gateway interface scripts and a browser to view the various web pages.



Caltrans District 11

Traffic Operations Division


Traffic Systems Branch

IRVINE PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE *Safety*

To reduce the danger of passengers ignoring warning devices and trespassing on foot across the Union Pacific railroad tracks, the City of Irvine developed an innovative overcrossing to provide safe passage between north and southbound passenger loading platforms. Extending the center security fence 60 meters beyond loading platforms prevents passengers from cutting across tracks in pursuit of trains.

Amtrak and Metrolink installed loud speakers for announcements on light poles. Elevators allow easy access to the bridge and a new ramp facilitates handicap access. Benches and shelters allow passengers to relax while waiting for trains. The inclusion of benches along the bridge walkway offers a leisurely viewing area of the spectacular Saddleback Mountains and surrounding area.



**City of Irvine**

Adams/Mallory Construction Co., Inc.

Cho Design Associates


Caltrans Rail Division

INTERSTATE 680/STATE ROUTE 24 INTERCHANGE *Special Recognition for Excellence in Traffic Congestion Relief*

Dubbed “Dysfunction Junction” by frustrated motorists before its recent reconstruction by Caltrans District 4, the Interstate 680/State Route 24 interchange now provides motorists with smooth sailing as they navigate its reconfigured bridges and connections.

Originally opened to traffic in 1959 and built to handle 60 000 vehicles, the interchange today accommodates 295 000 daily users. Keeping traffic moving during construction was a continuing challenge. To accomplish this, temporary connectors were built to move traffic through the interchange. As the new connectors were finished, traffic was rerouted onto them and the original structures demolished. Caltrans engineers employed seven construction contracts, using this strategy, for six separate traffic movements. Today, with a highly functional interchange, commuters find their daily lives a great deal easier.



**Caltrans District 4**

City of Walnut Creek


Contra Costa Transportation Authority

SAFETY IN THE SACRAMENTO RIVER CANYON *Safety*

To enhance safety in a 75-km freeway stretch in mountainous terrain where an accident could tie up travelers bound for Canada or Mexico, Caltrans District 2 teamed with Advanced Planning, Environmental Planning, Maintenance, CHP and the Department of Fish and Game to create a master plan for operations, safety, emergency response and an environmentally sensitive design.

The final product included retractable barrier gates for incident detours, CHP/Maintenance turnarounds, animal crossings and flared offset openings with pre-installed, turnable arrow boards. These features improved efficiency, safety, maintenance and operations while maintaining the department’s commitment to the environment.

District 2 increased driver safety by adding the median barrier, and also included elements that allow quick emergency response time, timely crash removal and cleanup and increased worker safety.

**Caltrans District 2**

J.F. Shea Co., Inc

Energy Absorption Systems, Inc

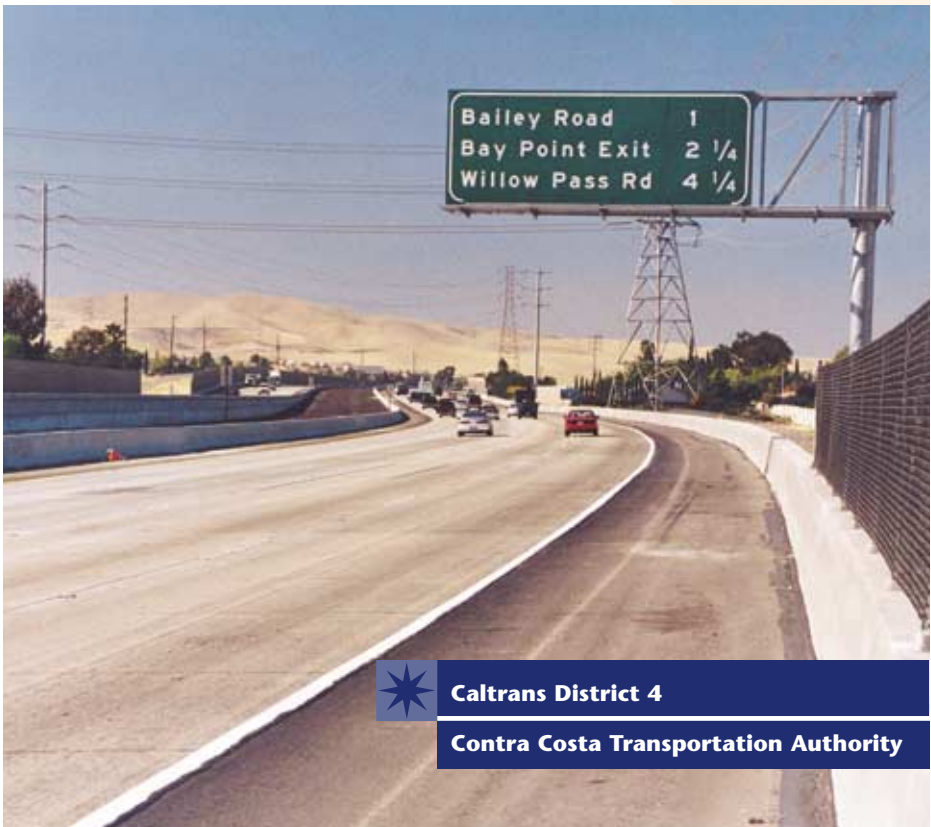


STATE ROUTE 4 WIDENING *Urban Highway*

In cooperation with the County of Contra Costa, Caltrans District 4 widened State Route 4 from four to eight lanes to relieve congestion and provide for continued economic development of eastern Contra Costa County. The widening also involved incorporation of High Occupancy Vehicle lanes of 9.9 and 11.5 km. Freeway opera-

tional analyses indicate that total person delay experienced on the section and associated ramps has been reduced by 30 percent. Value Analysis concluded that the proposed project demonstrates the best possible engineering design at minimal cost.

Culvert improvements and other drainage features were added to the original project concept, through creative financing, to reduce or eliminate flooding problems. Offsite planting was provided in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Game and the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. A collaborative effort and partnership between Caltrans and the Contra Costa Transportation Authority expedited the project to bring congestion relief to this major corridor in Contra Costa County.



**Caltrans District 4**

Contra Costa Transportation Authority





ATLANTIC BOULEVARD INTERSECTION

Urban Highway

The intersection of Atlantic Boulevard with Telegraph Road/Goodrich Boulevard/ Ferguson Drive in the city of Commerce was known locally as the “Mixmaster” because of its complex alignment and confusing signage. The city designed a replacement of the intersection to improve safety and traffic flow, using a traffic simulation model to test the adequacy of turn storage bays and photo imaging to allow those interested to understand the proposed project.

The city redesigned the project area as a single unit with five closely spaced traffic signals operating in a coordinated fashion. New and more visible guide signs assist drivers through this complex intersection. The new bridge, roadways and appurtenances have made this area a positive landmark for the City of Commerce and improved traffic flow and safety for the 50 000 vehicles that use the Mixmaster every day.



City of Commerce

Los Angeles County Department of Public Works

Catalina Engineering, Inc.

Brutoco Engineering & Construction, Inc.



RURAL TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT CENTER

System Operations

A low-cost, yet highly functional information and communication system for traveler safety and enjoyment in District 2's north region is the result of an in-house, design-build process that produced Caltrans' first rural Transportation Management Center. Caltrans electrical engineers, building maintenance workers and field maintenance personnel accomplished the majority of construction. The center was up and operating for the major snowstorms of February 2001, 10 months after funding approval.

While TMCs have mostly been deemed appropriate for urban areas, this rural one handles problems of a different nature. More than half the roadways in District 2, including 40 mountain passes, exist at elevations in excess of 1200 meters. Steep grades, inclement weather, wild fires and their effects on road conditions,

sparse and patchy telecommunications structures, and a widely dispersed highway system are all conditions this rural traffic management center deals with daily.

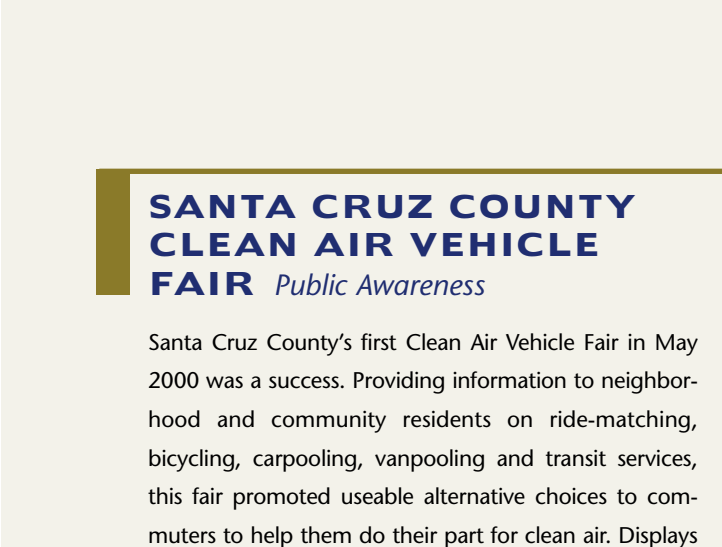


Caltrans District 2

Maintenance and Operations

New Tech and Research

Traffic



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY CLEAN AIR VEHICLE FAIR

Public Awareness

Santa Cruz County's first Clean Air Vehicle Fair in May 2000 was a success. Providing information to neighborhood and community residents on ride-matching, bicycling, carpooling, vanpooling and transit services, this fair promoted useable alternative choices to commuters to help them do their part for clean air. Displays and test rides of electric, hybrid and compressed natural gas cars, bicycles and scooters, electric car conversions and compressed natural gas buses provided the real thing for those who wished to consider alternatives.



Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

City of Santa Cruz Public Works

Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments

Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District



LEGOLAND ROUNDABOUT

System Operations

Located in San Diego County, this roundabout provides more than just an aesthetic entry to the LegoLand theme park. It also allows for free flow of traffic, provides low-cost lighting and maintenance when compared to a signalized intersection and visually enhances the surrounding area with its colorful median planting and landscape. It has operated without any reported accidents since opening in 1999 and is handling anticipated traffic flows as planned.



City of Carlsbad Public Works

Engineering Department

DEPLOYMENT OF LED TRAFFIC SIGNALS

Maintenance Operations

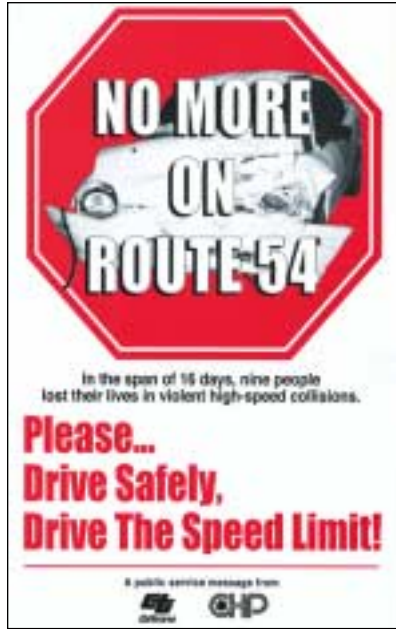
Completion of light-emitting diode lighting for 4500 traffic signals by June 2002 will save taxpayers millions of dollars in annual electrical costs. The signals operate on approximately 85 percent of the power that it takes to fuel incandescent lamps. Additionally, their battery back-up systems are smaller, higher capacity, and far less expensive to maintain than their cumbersome counterparts. Broad applicability of LED signals means a tremendous benefit to the state in terms of less non-operational time, less maintenance and huge cost savings.



Caltrans Division of Maintenance

Caltrans Traffic Operations





 **Caltrans District 11**

The campaign included distribution of posters to high schools and shopping malls near the crash sites. Caltrans joined forces to air paid and free commercials on the local MTV cable station, which boasts a preponderant market share of young adults. Well-received by school officials, business owners and elected representatives, the campaign generated daily discussion in local media. From the start to finish of the public awareness campaign on January 5, 2001, when Caltrans announced the completion of a new median barrier, no crashes were reported along this stretch of highway.

NO MORE ON 54

Public Awareness

Nine fatalities in three weeks on Route 54 in San Diego County prompted Caltrans District 11's Public Affairs Office to launch an awareness campaign to address the situation. Based on crash information provided by local law enforcement, the district targeted its message to young adults, ages 16-24, the ages of the responsible drivers in each of the three fatal crashes.


INTERSTATE 15 IN SAN DIEGO

Special Recognition for Excellence in Context Sensitive Solutions

The Interstate 15 project in San Diego closed the last gap, known for years as the "missing link," in an interstate highway by constructing an eight-lane freeway through the San Diego neighborhoods of City Heights, Kensington and Normal Heights.

This project shows what can happen when constituents are welcomed and included in the project development process. By providing a forum for community and neighborhood participation, the project team met and even exceeded the needs of those people who were impacted. The 11 overcrossings were designed expressly to knit neighborhoods together by providing pedestrian and bicyclist circulation and open space for parks, plazas, bridges and retail buildings.



-  **Caltrans District 11 Landscape**
- City of San Diego**
- T.Y. Lin International**
- C.C. Meyers, Inc.**
- AMEC**

FEATHER RIVER BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

Major Structures

In replacing the 75-year-old bridge over the Feather River on Route 162 near Oroville, Caltrans District 3 had to meet current seismic criteria, provide a conduit for utilities, meet demand for future capacity and minimally disrupt travelers during construction. The right of way allowed scant room to avoid conflict with the existing structure.

These conditions led to the selection of a cast-in-place, pre-stressed concrete box girder design that allowed flexibility for the construction work adjacent to and under the existing bridge, decreasing the impact on travelers, concealing utilities within the bridge and facilitating future widening.



-  **Caltrans Engineering Services Division of Structure Design**
- Caltrans District 3 Project Management**
- Caltrans District 3 Construction**

DONNER PARK OVERCROSSING

Major Structures


Located on the historic Lincoln Highway, this project replaced the existing Donner Park overcrossing near Truckee with a modern, two-span structure and specially-designed retaining walls to mitigate the impact on an environmentally sensitive area.



The purpose of the project was to increase the structure's vertical clearance; add to longevity with state-of-the-art epoxy coated rebar, higher strength concrete and polyester concrete overlay and snow plow deflectors, and upgrade safety features with wider lanes, modern safety shape barriers and longer spans.

Designers also strove to create a gateway into the mountainous Lake Tahoe region, using haunched girders and sloping abutments to reflect textures of the surrounding area.



-  **Caltrans Engineering Services Division Design Branch 6**
- Herb Benedict Benco Contracting and Engineering Inc.**
- Caltrans District 3**

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT IN DISTRICT 1

Maintenance Operations

On the environmentally sensitive North Coast, District 1 employees at all levels are participating in an effort to implement effective integrated pest management. Managerial employees have formed a roadside vegetation management advisory committee to evaluate measures suggested by field staff. Local agencies participate in decisions on whether or not to use chemical vegetation control. The district meets in public with any requesting local agency to discuss decisions regarding use of herbicides.

The district recently installed vegetation control mats at several locations where repetitive control otherwise would be necessary and is testing polyurethane foam, sprayed beneath guardrail, for its ability to inhibit weed growth. It is conducting similar tests of super-heated weed steamers, the paving under guardrails and the

herbicidal effects of corn gluten, drawing high praise from local agencies.



 **Caltrans District 1 Maintenance and Operations**

FARADAY AVENUE

Rural Highway

Faraday Avenue, in San Diego County, winds through farmland and native coastal sage habitats. Designed to blend seamlessly into the hillside, the road provides relief to other congested thoroughfares to and from the industrial center of Carlsbad.

The need for Faraday Avenue became apparent when private development was delayed due to environmental constraints. In order to receive all permits, the roadway was redesigned to eliminate wetland impacts. Because the project was located in the coastal zone, summer construction was required. Vegetation was hand-cleared by a separate contract prior to the February start of the gnatcatcher breeding season.

Pedestrian undercrossings accommodate future park uses. Deep cleanouts were required to remove clay deposits from the canyons. Culverts were designed to maintain primary drainage patterns and riprap energy dissipaters were used to slow storm water.



City of Carlsbad Public Works Department

LODI RAIL STATION

Intermodal Facilities

Because its location could not accommodate Amtrak trains, the rehabilitation of the Lodi Rail Station began with the relocation of the historic Southern Pacific Depot. The building was relocated, restored and now accommodates trains without disrupting downtown traffic. New structures, added to complete the station, include the Lodi Bicycle Patrol officers' office and a break room for bus drivers. For aesthetics and long life, the entire station was rebuilt using high quality materials.

The finished station is served by all area public transportation. Included are Amtrak and Greyhound; SMART and SCT/LINK, two intercity bus providers; Grapeline, Lodi's fixed-route service, and Lodi's Dial-a-Ride service. Express commuter trains, due to start service within five years, will connect Lodi with Sacramento and the Bay Area.



City of Lodi
San Joaquin Council of Governments
Richard Pombo, U.S. House of Representatives
Assemblyman Anthony Pescetti



ROUTE 92 SLOW VEHICLE LANE

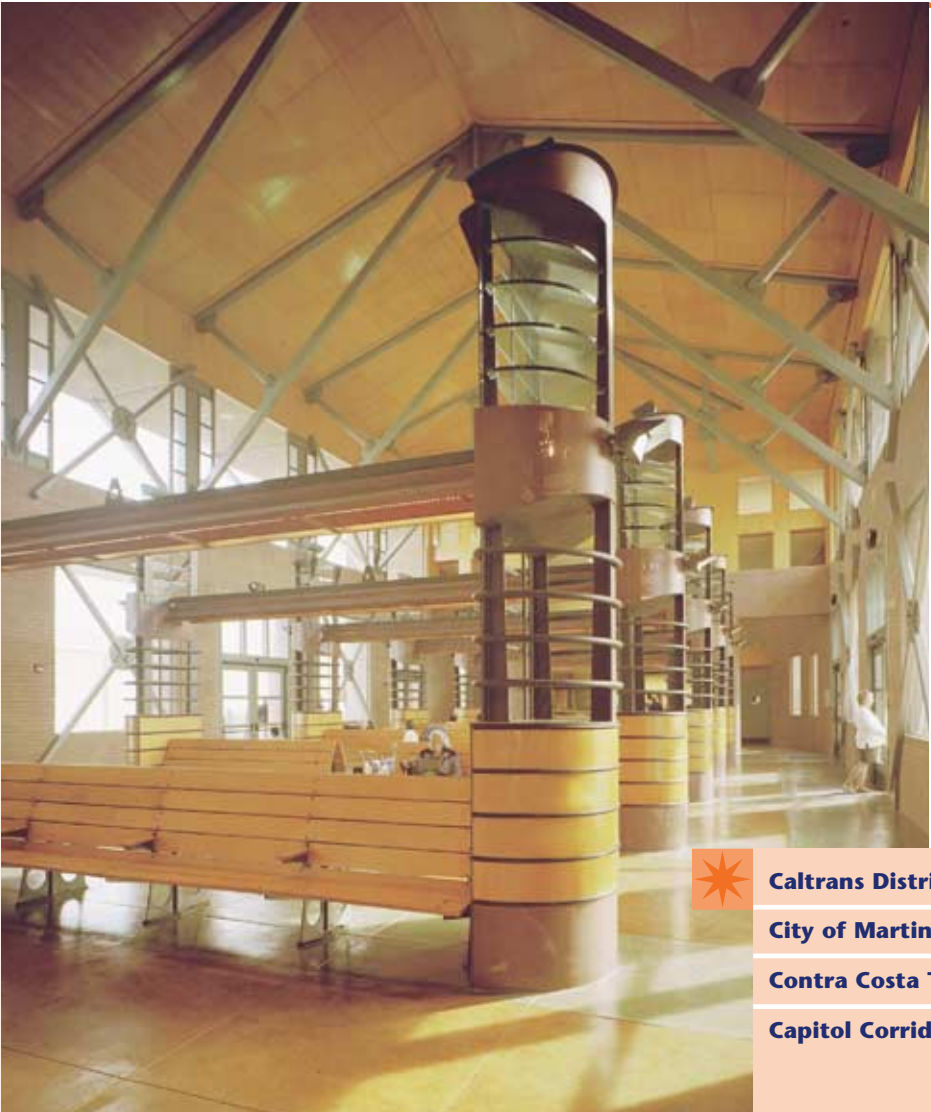
Route 92's restricted horizontal and vertical alignment and grades of up to seven percent, traversed by a high volume of trucks, recreational vehicles, commuters and recreational and public transit, required a facility for slow vehicles.



District 4 Office of Design
San Mateo County Transportation Authority
O.C. Jones & Sons and R.M. Harris Co., Inc.

To minimize impacts in the mountainous terrain and an environmentally-sensitive watershed, retaining walls were used to eliminate extensive excavation. Storm water pollution prevention measures maintained water quality in creeks at the bottom of the steep slopes. Vegetated rock slope protection at two locations encourages willow growth. Special measures were taken to protect the California red-legged frog.

The nine hand-sculpted soil nail walls and 14 soldier pile walls represent engineering, design and construction successes. Of particular interest is incorporation of experimental hollow-injection anchors in one soil nail wall.



Caltrans District 4
City of Martinez
Contra Costa Transportation Authority
Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority

MARTINEZ RAIL STATION

Intermodal Facilities

Caltrans, the City of Martinez and Amtrak West celebrated the grand opening of the new Martinez Amtrak Station, the fifth busiest in California, in September 2001.

The new station, with 930 m² of operational space, meets all requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. It features new platforms, adequate passenger seating, accessible restrooms, 160 parking spaces, 10 bus bays, a carpool and vanpool lot, bicycle parking and off-street taxi zones. Ticketing and baggage facilities meet modern standards.

Because it is a junction for several passenger and freight lines, Martinez had been a choke point for rail operations. Four tracks now allow for separation of passenger and freight traffic, decreasing delays for both.



THE NORTH BROADWAY BRIDGE

Historic Restoration

When the North Broadway Bridge, constructed in 1912 by the City of Los Angeles, needed retrofitting to withstand a major earthquake, it presented an opportunity to reintroduce the character-defining, stylized elements that had been removed from the bridge in the 1930s.

The ornamental three-globe electroliers were replicated as indicated on the original design to their original height, with care taken to incorporate the column design specified on the historic plans. Sensitive cleaning materials were used to remove old paint that covered graffiti. The massive Beaux-Art pylons, set at an angle for best viewing by transcontinental passengers, were reconstructed from historic, as-built drawings. The North Broadway Bridge restoration represents an accurate preservation program and an important example of a sensitive public works project.



Caltrans District 07 - Environmental Planning

Caltrans District 07 - Office of Local Programs

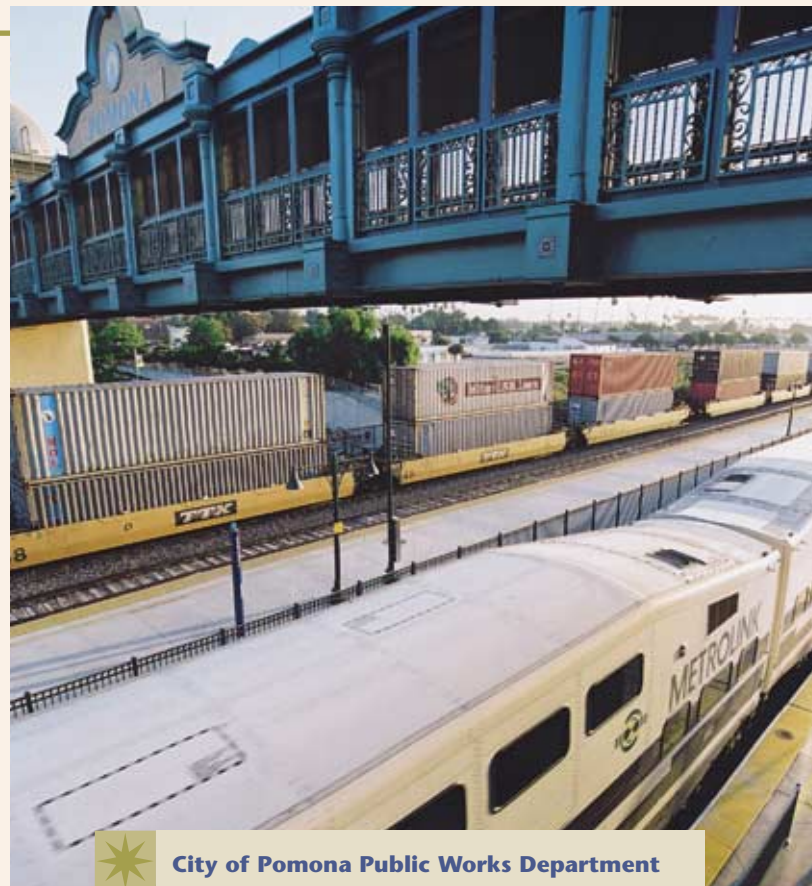
Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering

THE POMONA REGIONAL TRANSIT STATION

Historic Restoration

Pomona's downtown regional transit center, completed in the winter of 2001, restored the 1940 historic Southern Pacific Depot, improved tracks, provided a pedestrian overcrossing and a new Metrolink station. These improvements supplemented the nearby regional Pomona Valley Transportation and Foothill Transit center.

The rehabilitation of the depot maintained the historical Mission-style architecture while improving the interior waiting room and created offices for regional transit agencies. The pedestrian overcrossing maintains the Mission revival architecture of the depot while providing safe access to Metrolink, Amtrak and regional buses. The new Metrolink Station facing the depot provides commuter train service to multiple mass transportation connections. Passenger shelters, mosaic passenger platform, information kiosk and parking lot all were designed to complement the station's architectural style.



City of Pomona Public Works Department

**Norm Spielman & Associates
Construction Company**

M S Construction Company



**EXCELLENCE
IN TRANSPORTATION**

2002 JUDGES

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Rossetti Architects

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City of Temecula
Public Works Department

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Senior Engineer
City of Temecula
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Dr. Jamie Cleland
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EDAW, Inc.

Mike Cooper, P.E., S.E.
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Kevin Hamblin
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Community Development
City of Eureka

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Office of Special Projects
California Highway Patrol

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